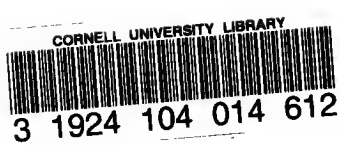
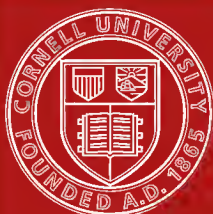


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Rev. W. ALLEN'S

ELECTION SERMON.



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SERMON,

PREACHED BEFORE

HIS EXCELLENCY CALEB STRONG, Esq.

GOVERNOR,

HIS HONOR WILLIAM PHILLIPS, Esq.

LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR,

THE HONORABLE COUNCIL,

AND THE

TWO HOUSES COMPOSING THE LEGISLATURE

OF THE

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS,

MAY 26, 1813,

Being the ANNIVERSARY ELECTION,

BY WILLIAM ALLEN, A. M.

Congregational Minister in Pittsfield.

BOSTON :

RUSSELL & CUTLER, PRINTERS.

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1813.

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COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS.

In Senate May 27th, 1843.

Ordered, That the Hon. WENDELL DAVIS, WOLCOT HUBBELL, and JOSHUA GAGE, Esquires, be a committee to wait upon the Rev. WILLIAM ALLEN, and in the name of the Senate, to thank him for the Sermon yesterday delivered before His Excellency the Governor, His Honor the Lieutenant Governor, the Hon. Council, and the two branches of the Legislature, and request a copy thereof for the press.

Attest,

S. F. MCLEARY, *Clerk.*

SERMON.

JOHN, XVIII, 36—My Kingdom is not of this world.

THE religion, in which the civil rulers of this Commonwealth profess their belief, was as humble in its origin, as it is grand in its design. We behold its **AUTHOR** carried as a malefactor into the judgment hall of Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea, and there arraigned as the enemy of Cæsar,—charged, among other crimes, with that of setting himself up as an earthly king. He, who sought not honor from man, and who had not where to lay his head, is accused of ambition!—accused too by the hypocritical Jews, who, if his breast had been fired with the ambitious designs, which they attributed to him, would have hailed him as their deliverer, and would have rallied around his standard, that they might burst the yoke of oppression. Although the accusation was malicious and false; yet Jesus Christ was indeed a **KING**, but such a king, as the world had never seen. In the immutable councils of God he was destined to receive a spiritual and everlasting kingdom. “Unto us,” said the prophet Isaiah, in reference to Christ, “a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end.” In language equally explicit, the prophet Zechariah exclaims, anticipating the advent of Messiah, “rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem. Behold, thy king cometh unto thee; he is just and having salvation.” In addition to these and other predictions, which were uttered ages before their accomplishment, we hear the angel Gabriel, when he announced to the virgin Mary, that she should bring forth a son and call his name **JESUS**, saying to her, “he shall be great, and shall be called the son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give unto him the throne of his father David; and he shall

reign over the house of Jacob forever ; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."

In correspondence with these representations we find, that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as begotten by the power of the Highest, and the Son of man, as born of a woman, assumed the character of a king. When he went up to Jerusalem to the feast, a multitude of his disciples met him, and cried out, in the voice of joy and praise, "hossanna !—Blessed be the king, that cometh in the name of the Lord ; peace in heaven, and glory in the highest."—The unbelieving Pharisees, indignant that such honors should be paid him, and that he should receive them, called upon him to rebuke his disciples ; but he answered, "I tell you, that if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out." This assumption of the dignity of king Messiah rankled in the breast of the earthly minded Jews, who expected a temporal prince, and whose misapprehensions and pride were shocked by the humble circumstances and unambitious character of the Lord of glory ; and they maliciously founded upon it one article in the accusation, which they produced against him. When Pilate, sitting as judge of him, who will finally judge angels and men, interrogated him, in relation to this charge, "art thou the king of the Jews ?"—the Son of God, while he did not shrink from the avowal of his dignity, yet condescended to vindicate his innocence of the crime alleged against him. He replied, in the words of the text, MY KINGDOM IS NOT OF THIS WORLD.

On this anniversary, which is dear to the hearts of the citizens of this Commonwealth, I propose, my respected auditory, to call your attention to the government of Jesus Christ, and to illustrate more particularly the nature of his kingdom, especially as contrasted with the kingdoms of this world.

In contemplating the kingdom of Christ, the first subject of consideration is its DESIGN.

The fabric of earthly government is reared in order to afford mankind a security against many temporal evils, from which insulated individuals could not be protected. It is true that this structure, which ought to be simple and

convenient, and a safe place of retreat, has sometimes been converted into a costly palace, by which means the people have been impoverished, and sometimes into a strong castle, in which they have been imprisoned. But whatever perversions of the ends of government may be found in the history of nations, its design, as instituted by heaven, is the maintenance of the natural rights of men, that they may "lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." When the subject is protected in his person, liberty, and property, the end of civil government is accomplished.

The design of the government of Jesus Christ, on the contrary, is not thus confined to this transient life, for he came not to wield an earthly authority, such as is possessed by the rulers of this world, but to subdue the heart and reign in the immortal soul. To those, who are familiar with the scriptures, it cannot be necessary to shew, that the phrases, "the kingdom of Christ," "the kingdom of God," and "the kingdom of heaven," are of synonymous import, and are promiscuously applied to the christian religion in respect to the dominion of its author, to the form and extent of its existence, to its influence upon the character, and to the blessings which it imparts, both in the present and future life, unto them who embrace it. This various and indiscriminate phraseology is easily accounted for, because the authority, possessed by the Son of God, was given him by the Father, and is exerted for the express purpose of redeeming those, whom he is appointed to save, from the bondage of sin, and of exalting them to felicity and glory in heaven. It was a vast design, which produced the establishment of the mediatorial kingdom of Christ,—a design embracing nothing less, than the eternal salvation of the elect. The blessed Redeemer of sinners came to seek and to save that, which was lost, to dissipate by the beams of divine truth the darkness, which overspread the minds of men, to eradicate the spirit of selfishness and to implant in the soul the principles of benevolence, to extinguish the unholy passions of the heart, to render the impious transgressor a devout worshipper of

God, and thus to prepare men for "the inheritance of the saints in light."

The illustrious statesman, who with disinterested zeal applies the powers of an enlightened, comprehensive mind to the promotion of the political interests of his country,—the intrepid hero, who despises danger, when called to fight her battles in support of her liberty and rights,—and the active philanthropist, who devotes his life to the alleviation of human misery, are deserving of high honor ; for the objects, which call forth their exertions, are good and great, casting a resplendent beam of glory upon those who seek them. But what are the highest aims of earthly benevolence, compared with the designs of the Son of God ? His aim was not to enrich the society, in which he lived, with political institutions conducive to their prosperity and glory ; nor to give liberty to a nation and to establish the independence of his country on an immovable basis ; nor merely to diminish the calamities incident to human life. He had a spirit of benevolence, enlarged and expanded, extending from earth to heaven, and embracing eternity instead of a moment. He came to communicate joys, lasting as perception, and imperishable as the soul. He came to impart the knowledge of the true God, to open the world of spirits to those, who dwell upon the earth, to inspire principles, which shall remain and cheer the heart, when the dearest of earthly privileges shall be lost and the best of earthly institutions shall be destroyed.

When we see a virtuous people bursting the chains of oppression and emerging from the damp and contagious atmosphere of their prison to breathe the unpolluted air of freedom ;—we behold a spectacle animating and sublime. But what is civil liberty, compared with that liberty, which Jesus Christ bestows upon mankind ? Under the freest government unholy passions will tear the bosom of the transgressor, and in a few days, should he die in his sins, he will be completely miserable and forever enslaved, descending into the everlasting prison of darkness. But let the sinner be liberated from the chains of sin, let him be lifted from the corruption of nature to breathe the

pure spirit of grace, and although every combination of earthly trouble should assail him, he might still be happy, rejoicing in the God of his salvation ; and after death he will ascend to the eternal mansions of holiness and peace. It was the design of Jesus Christ to bestow upon man this exalted and permanent felicity. The extent of his views, when establishing his kingdom, throws contempt upon the narrowness of all worldly projects. Before the wideness and grandeur of his designs the most extensive views of the rulers of earthy empires contract and dwindle into a point.

The ORIGIN and FOUNDATION of the kingdom of Christ demand, in the next place, our attention.

The governments of this world have frequently originated in conquest and fraud, in the triumph of the strong over the weak, and in the impositions of the cunning upon the simple. Within the memory of those, who hear me, how many new kingdoms have been created by the will and moulded according to the pleasure of arbitrary power ? Seldom has a nation, like our own, after solemn deliberation and with a single view to the public welfare, defined the boundaries between the liberty of the citizen and the power of the ruler, and established a free and equal system of government. Although it is the will of God, that men should be connected in civil society ; yet he has designated no families nor individuals, as having a natural right to govern the rest of mankind. Enlightened by his word, our reason must indeed consent to the position, that those, who are pre-eminent for intellectual greatness, for comprehensive views and keen discernment, for wisdom in contrivance and vigor in execution,—who are influenced by the purest principles of virtue, and who have the deepest sense of accountability and the most ardent devotion,—in short, that those, who are best qualified to govern, ought to be elevated to power. But even they have no claims to dominion, which they may enforce, and in the whole history of the world we find few such men invested with supreme authority.

While the constitutions of most states are the edicts of triumphant ambition, or imperfect and mutilated charters

of freedom, wrested from the hands of tyranny ; the foundation of the empire of Christ was laid in justice. The great God, whose everlasting counsels will stand, and who will do all his pleasure, hath constituted his beloved Son the ruler of the world, “ putting all things in subjection under his feet,” and requiring all men to receive him as their sovereign. Thus by the express designation of the Father, he is made Lord of all, “ angels, and authorities, and powers being made subject unto him.” All the qualifications for empire are also concentrated in his character, such as perfect benevolence, and consummate wisdom, and irresistible power ; so that on this account his claim to authority is very unlike the pretensions of many of the rulers of this world, as well as on account of the necessary dependence of all things upon his supporting hand, “ for by him were all things created, that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers ; all things were created by him and for him, and by him all things consist.” There are yet other reasons, which establish his right of dominion. He is the Redeemer of sinners, the mediator between God and man ; and in consequence of his humiliation and of “ his obedience to the death of the cross, God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name, which is above every name ; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” His empire is founded in conquest ; but it was a conquest over the powers of darkness, intrenched in the human heart—over the enemies of holiness and goodness: His empire is founded in blood ; not however in the blood of slaughtered armies, but in his own blood, voluntarily shed in order that he might make propitiation for the sins of the world,—in order that he might redeem the enslaved, and pardon the guilty, and save the lost. It is therefore most fit, that he should be invested with the attributes of royalty ;—it is therefore most fit, that “ the ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands of the heavenly host should say with a loud voice, worthy

is the Lamb, that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing !”

While the dominion of the Son of God is thus established in righteousness, the LAWS of his kingdom are perfectly good.

As earthly legislatures, composed of depraved men, are liable to corruption and sometimes completely under the control of sovereigns, who have little regard for the public welfare ; the statutes, which they make, are frequently designed rather for the honor and interest of the prince, than for the benefit of the subject, and are statutes of unrighteousness. How often has “ the throne of iniquity framed mischief by a law ?” How often, in the history of nations, have the people of a king groaned under the oppression of unjust laws, and been subjected to a merciless and resistless tyranny ? Even in free republics, legislative assemblies, through ignorance and misapprehension, or from party zeal and love of power, may establish laws, manifestly partial, unequal, and unjust.

It is a grand distinction in the kingdom of Christ, that all his precepts are benévolent, and wise, and holy. The LORD, who is our lawgiver and our king, loves righteousness and hates iniquity ; and “ the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul ; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple ; the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart ; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.” He requires men, whose senses he has rendered the sources of delight, and whom he has surrounded by objects, capable of affording them gratification, to be temperate in the enjoyment of earthly good, and to subject their passions to rules, designed to guard against the evils of excess, preserving unimpaired the powers both of mind and body, that they may prosecute with vigor the great objects of their being. He requires men, whom he has placed together in society, to be united in affection, to sympathise with each other in scenes both of joy and of sorrow, to respect each other’s rights and seek each other’s welfare ;—the rich to be “ rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to com-

municate, thus laying up in store, for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life ;”—the poor to be industrious and contented, “ rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he hath promised to them, that love him ;”—the subject to honor and obey the magistrate, and the magistrate to be upright and diligent, “ fearing God and hating covetousness.” He requires men, who are sinners, condemned by the divine law, and liable to “ everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power,” immediately to repent and implore mercy, and to believe in him, “ who is exalted a Prince and a Savior for to give repentance and the remission of sins,” and who can pardon the greatest sin, and wash away the deepest stain of guilt, and give peace to the most disquieted conscience, and gladden the most desponding heart. He requires men, who are the creatures of God, to love him with all their souls, to prefer the light of his countenance to the brightest prospects of earthly felicity, to bow submissive to his will under all the afflicting dispensations of his providence, to praise him for the various acts of his goodness, and to “ worship him continually in the beauty of holiness.” He requires men, who will soon be removed from the earth, to set their affection on things, which are heavenly and divine, to “ seek first the kingdom of God,” to covet incorruptible treasures, to thirst for perpetual joys, and to aspire after immortal glory.

Who can be so blind as not to perceive, that these laws are stamped with wisdom and goodness, and that if universally obeyed, they would banish from the earth a great part of the misery, which exists, and would exalt men to the highest and most durable felicity ? Take the character of a good man from the precepts of the gospel ;—behold it in the life of Jesus ! What humility, what meekness and gentleness, what purity and temperance and wisdom, what kindness and disinterested good will, what a bright flame of piety and devotion, what unquenchable zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of men shine forth in his example ? Imagine, that all men were moulded into the same form of goodness ; and say, whether the

wilderness would not then become a fruitful field?—Whether this desolate world would not be converted into the paradise of God?

It is a peculiarity in the laws of Christ, that they are spiritual, extending to the thoughts and affections and purposes of the heart, and binding in all cases the conscience. Although the design of government confines the acts of earthly legislatures to the civil conduct, the restriction has been often disregarded, and in numberless instances the vain and preposterous attempt has been made to regulate the understandings and faith of men. Chiefly by the instigation of worldly minded ecclesiastics, the civil power has frequently prescribed what doctrines of religion should be believed, and what duties of religion should be performed. But whenever human laws come in competition with the divine law, enjoining what God forbids, or forbidding what God enjoins, every conscientious man, who remembers, that he sustains an individual accountability, will disobey them, and with the determined courage of Peter and John in a similar situation will say unto those, who intrude upon the prerogative of Jehovah, “whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you, more than unto God, judge ye.”

In its ADMINISTRATION, as well as in its laws, the kingdom of Jesus Christ has little affinity with the kingdoms of this world.

On the height of power, man is apt to be giddy. The princes of the earth, in administering the affairs of their respective empires, have generally imagined, that they were lifted above all responsibility. They have been unmindful of the future judgment, and have overlooked the tremendous abyss, into which they were about to plunge themselves. In the prosecution of their narrow, selfish, and unholy designs, they have been deaf to the voice of justice and humanity. Urged by the irrepressible desire of extending wide their personal authority, of increasing their resources, and of sending out their fame to the ends of the earth, how often have kings and emperors waged unjust wars, and acquired by violence the means of prosecuting them? Of all the forms, in which human guilt can be presented to the eye,

a mighty warrior, wielding a gigantic force, which he has created by crime, and guiding it to universal conquest, is the most terrific. And how perverted and depraved are the sentiments of mankind, when the most crimson guilt, because connected with mighty talents or because it is triumphant, is considered as bleached into the whiteness of snow, and when what is vast and desolating is admired, rather than what is good and useful? The records of history are familiar to you; but it cannot be necessary to appeal to your recollection of the ages, that are past, to convince you, that the administration of human governments is frequently iniquitous. The present age has been filled with profligate treachery and enormous violence; and the outrages upon the dearest rights of freemen, which we ourselves have experienced, must impress us more forcibly, than any historical facts, with the conviction, that the kingdoms of this world are frequently administered by injustice, and should lead us to contemplate with joy unspeakable the kingdom of Jesus Christ, the administration of which is perfectly righteous.

We hear the voice of prophecy saying, in reference to this King of Zion, "thy throne, O God, is forever and ever; the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre." Instead of oppressing mankind, "he judges the poor of the people, he saves the children of the needy, he breaks in pieces the oppressor." Instead of desolating as a torrent, "he comes down like rain upon the mown grass, as showers, that water the earth." Instead of being a scourge to the human race, "he is an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place; as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."

As his object is not the establishment of temporal dominion, but the promotion of virtue and holiness; so the principal agents, which he employs, are not crafty politicians nor blood thirsty warriors, but humble ministers of the gospel, among whom, as at first, so now there are "not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, for God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and the weak things of the world to confound the things, which are mighty,—that no flesh should glory in his presence." It is by means of the plain

and faithful preaching of the gospel, by the earnest inculcation of the doctrine of the cross, that the prey is rescued from the destroyer, that aliens from the commonwealth of Israel are introduced into the household of faith, that enslaved sinners are "delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son," and that the everlasting purposes of God, pertaining to the salvation of men, are carried into effect. The grand efficient agent in the kingdom of the Redeemer is the HOLY SPIRIT, by whom the sinner is "created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works," and whose agency, whenever it is exerted in renewing the heart, precludes the possibility of resistance, for it is an influence over the affections and will.

As the kingdom of Christ is purely spiritual, being the empire of truth in the heart, he has given to his ministers none but spiritual powers. He says to them, "ye know, that they, which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles, exercise lordship over them, and their great ones exercise authority upon them; but so it shall not be among you; but whosoever will be great among you shall be your minister; and whosoever of you will be chief shall be servant of all." Unmindful of this fundamental law, the heralds of the cross soon aspired after worldly authority, and the world has seen with amazement the pretended vicar of Jesus Christ binding princes in chains, and disposing of kingdoms by his word. In consequence of the fatal alliance, which the church has claimed and formed with the state, not only has the purity of the gospel been corrupted, but thousands have been tortured in order to extort from them a confession of heresy, and millions have been put to death because they would not conform to the religion, which was established by law. But in the providence of God "the wrath of man is made to praise Him." It was to escape from ecclesiastical tyranny, that the fathers of this commonwealth braved the dangers of a deep, almost trackless, and the horrors of a wilderness, in which was heard only the yell of the savage. They brought with them an abhorrence of ecclesiastical oppression, and an extinguishable love of liberty. The spirit, which animated them, has descended unimpaired and very much enlightened and improved to their children, now spread over

this extensive country ; and at length, through the divine goodness, we see in our constitutions of government the temple of civil and religious liberty, resting on solid foundations, reared in just proportions and beautiful simplicity, capacious, easy of access, and forever, as we trust, an asylum for the oppressed servants of Jesus Christ.

It is a chief excellence in our civil constitutions, that religion, or what is called religion, is not interwoven in their texture, and that they are innocent of the crime of impiously encroaching upon the concerns of a kingdom, which is not of this world. No tyrannical bishop is here "a lord over God's heritage." No dignity claims the power of appointing the preachers of the everlasting gospel ; and the right of patronage introduces no servants of Satan into the vineyard of the Lord. No covetous shepherd is empowered by law "to eat the fat and to clothe himself with the wool, while he feeds not the flock." But, while we rejoice in the wise separation, which is made between the church and the state ; it ought not to be forgotten, that religion is intimately connected with the proper subjects of legislative consideration ; that the friends of religion, united in benevolent societies, have earthly interests, which need the protection of law ; and that civil rulers, without creating a religious establishment, without prostituting the sacred ordinances of the gospel, as qualifications for office, without encroaching upon what is purely ecclesiastical, should frown upon impiety, and encourage goodness, and extend the privileges of the gospel to those, who otherwise would not enjoy them.

The EXTENT and DURATION of the kingdom of Christ claim, in the last place, our attention.

The empires of this world, we know, are limited, and fluctuating, and perishable ; for the great monarchies and republics, which have filled the earth with misery, and the pages of history with recorded crimes, have in no instance acquired universal dominion, and have passed away. In like manner, at the time which God has appointed, the most powerful kingdoms, which now exist, will be overturned. But the kingdom of the Redeemer is immovable, and is destined to prevail throughout the earth, and to be perpetual in heaven. "I saw in the night-visions," saith

the prophet Daniel, "and behold one, like the Son of man, came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him : his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom that, which shall not be destroyed." He has the promise, from the Father, of "the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession." To the view of unbelief great and insurmountable obstacles to the general establishment of the reign of Christ will appear to exist. But in the sovereignty of Jesus, "the King of kings and the Lord of lords," the eye of faith will discern a cause, adequate to the removal of all obstacles and to the complete accomplishment of what is predicted in the divine word. "The kings of the earth may set themselves against him ;—but He, that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh ; the Lord shall have them in derision." The same irresistible power, which accompanied the gospel, when it was first promulgated, subduing the prejudices of the unlettered, and the arrogance of the learned, and the authority of the mighty, will still accompany it, until the dominion of Christ shall extend "from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth."

The attentive reader of prophecy and observer of events must perceive in the present state of the world striking indications, that the period is not remote, when the predictions of Him, "who declareth the end from the beginning," and "who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," shall be accomplished ;—when "in the wilderness waters shall break out, and streams in the desert ;"—when "instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle-tree ;"—when "the dark places of the earth" shall be penetrated by the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness ;—when "the habitations of cruelty" shall become the abodes of gentleness and love ;—when "the confused noise of the warrior" shall subside, and the voice of kindness and friendship shall be heard in its stead ;—and when "the inhabitants of the rock shall sing, and they shall shout from the top of the mountains, and give glory unto the

Lord, and declare his praise in the islands." But whether the period be nigh or distant ; yet, if the scriptures are true, all the enemies of the cross will be defeated and humbled by the omnipotence of Jesus, and this King of glory will extend his conquests, until at length "great voices in heaven" will be heard, "saying, the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ ; and he shall reign forever and ever." In the view of these promises, in the anticipation of these events, every disciple of the Redeemer will be disposed to exclaim, "blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things ; and blessed be his glorious name forever, and let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and amen."

In contemplating this scene of felicity the heart of the benevolent man almost bursts with gladness. But brighter and more magnificent prospects are placed before him, for the kingdom of the Redeemer, thus universally established in the earth, will not only exist "as long as the sun and the moon shall endure ;" but when the earth shall be consumed, and the sun shall be blotted out, it will remain unshaken. The Son of God will reign until all his enemies shall be subdued, and "the last enemy, that shall be destroyed, is Death." Even this enemy, to whom the kings and emperors of this world are subject, and who breaks in pieces their sceptres and crumbles their thrones into dust ;—this cruel tyrant, whom no entreaties can soften and no bribes divert from his purpose, who spares neither the holy nor the sinful, and who can neither be awed by dignity nor intimidated by power ;—even this mighty conqueror, who will triumph over the millions of the human race, will himself be subdued by the irresistible arm of Jesus Christ, for "all, who are in their graves, shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth, they who have done good to the resurrection of life, and they who have done evil to the resurrection of damnation." How joyful and glorious to the righteous, but how terrifying to the wicked will be this period, when the Lord Jesus, with his foot upon the neck of this potent enemy, and enriched with his spoils, shall declare to the universe, that Death is dead, and that his sleep shall be eternal !

Then will come the consummation of all things, when the Great Head of the Church, having destroyed all his enemies and brought all the redeemed to "the kingdom, prepared for them from the foundation of the world," shall deliver up his mediatorial authority to God, even the Father,—"that God may be all in all." "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father," and they will forever ascribe "blessing, and honor, and glory, and power unto him, that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."

The subject, upon which we have been dwelling, has a powerful claim to the attention of those, whom the suffrages of freemen have constituted legislators and rulers, and upon whom the preacher is called this day to enforce the duty of subjection to the authority of Jesus Christ. It is to his mind a grateful reflection, that the first and second magistrates of this commonwealth are by profession, and, as we trust, in reality, supremely attached to the prosperity of the kingdom of Christ. In addressing them and their associates in the management of our public affairs, all of whom, in obedience to the constitution, have avowed their belief in the divine authority of the Christian religion, the preacher, who draws his instructions and exhortations from the scriptures, and who approaches them in the name and with the spirit of his Master, may speak without fear, for he has a right to presume, that they will hear his words with respect.

Your particular duties in relation to the public concerns of this commonwealth it is not my province, respected rulers, to point out to you; but I may beg you faithfully and firmly to discharge them, that ye may prove "the ministers of God for good" to the people, whose civil interests are committed to your care. It is natural, that political subjects should occupy much of your attention; that ye should search into the foundation and principles of our state and national governments; that ye should be anxious to enact the most wholesome laws, and especially, in the perilous days of war to adopt the best measures for protecting the persons and guarding the liberties of the citizens of this state, while ye also respect the rights of the general government, and seek to preserve unbroken the harmonies of the national union. But in the

kingdom of Christ there is presented to you a subject of transcendent dignity and importance,—a subject, which will concern you, when the fabric of all earthly governments shall be dissolved, the thrones of monarchs being overturned and the foundations of republics ploughed up,—a subject which will affect you, when the earth shall be in flames and all its perishable interests shall be consumed.

Ye Fathers of our Republic! A minister of the everlasting gospel need offer no apology for exhorting you to make it the great object of your being in all situations, private and public,—by all your influence, whether derived from wealth, talent, distinction, or power,—by your example and prayers,—with the energy of hope and the zeal of love to promote the interests of the kingdom of God.

Ye believe the scriptures. Ye know, that “the unrighteous” of whatever class,—that those, who are guilty of “hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions,” as well as the covetous, and those, who yield themselves to the lusts of the flesh, shall not inherit the kingdom of God,—a kingdom, which is “within you,” and which is “not meat and drink, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.” In the view of these truths, and impressed with your accountability to God, who has “ordained the powers that be,” and whose “ministers” ye are, ye must feel it your duty to be “a terror to evil works,” and especially to set yourselves against all those prevalent vices, which expose us, as a people, to the judgments of heaven. Permit me to ask, whether there are no vices, most ruinous to the welfare of society, which need the correction of law; and whether we have no laws, which sleep, and sleep too because magistrates are unfaithful, bearing the sword in vain? If those, who are elevated above their brethren in the community, and whose influence is powerful, would exert themselves with vigor, and would act in concert; might they not set a flood-gate against the overflowings of intemperance? Might they not silence the tongue of the profane swearer? Might they not, on the sabbath, stop the wheels of the coach and of the waggon? Might they not, if in no other way, yet by their example, check that unquiet, violent, head-long spirit of party, which is a national sin, and which, if not softened down into the “moderation,” enjoined in the gospel, may scatter to the winds our

hopes of a permanent, united government, such as was established by our fathers?

Among the iniquities, which prevail in this country, may we not consider an unbalanced, political zeal as an evil of wide extent and most threatening aspect? It is a leprosy, which is felt from one extremity of the continent to the other, overspreading the whole body; for is it not politics, which chiefly occupies the thoughts, employs the conversation, awakens the desires, and stimulates the exertions of the greater part of the citizens of the United States? Are not most men anxious for the triumph of a particular party, as though eternity hung upon the result of a political struggle? It may be said indeed, that the times are dangerous; that the critical situation of our public affairs demands the most vigorous exertions; that our inestimable rights and privileges are invaded and it is incumbent upon us to defend them; that coldness would be a crime. But to all this it is easy to answer, that objects of the greatest magnitude claim the most ardent zeal, and that we are required by our sovereign to "seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." And if any wordly object is dear to us, the only certain way to accomplish it is to secure the divine blessing upon our efforts. If we exclude God from our thoughts and are not chiefly anxious to promote his glory; we have reason to apprehend, that he will blast our purposes, however wise, and will render our exertions ineffectual, however active. One pious, devout, zealous Christian is of more real value to a country, than hosts of nominal patriots. Had there been ten good men in Sodom, they would have rescued that city from the desolation, which all the skill of her statesmen could not avert.

Suffer me then, venerable Rulers, to exhort you to accept the privileges, to respect the laws, and to seek the interests of the kingdom of Christ. Your examples, if good, will diffuse blessings through the State; but if bad will spread wide the contagion of evil. Should ye neglect the gospel of salvation, your own enlightened reason must convince you, that no common degree of guilt will attach to your rebellion against the authority of God, for multitudes, who are disposed to tread in your steps, will follow you in the downward path to misery; but if ye yield your-

selves to the obedience of faith, and zealously promote the kingdom of the blessed Redeemer of sinners, yours will be a conspicuous reward. However elevated ye may be in dignity, and illustrious for knowledge and talents; yet it is made your duty, as it is the duty of all men, to receive the kingdom of God with the docility of a child, remembering, that "the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God." To be unmindful of the necessity of conversion by the grace of the Almighty, since "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God;"—to be unimpressed with your guilt, as transgressors of the divine law, for "all have sinned;"—to feel no necessity for the mediation of Jesus Christ in order to make atonement for iniquity and to bring the promise of pardon to the guilty;—to discern nothing of his greatness and majesty, as the King, whom the Father hath set upon his holy hill of Zion;—to be regardless of the pure and benevolent precepts of his gospel;—to be thus impenitent and unbelieving is to rebel against the authority of Jehovah, and to refuse subjection to the empire of Christ. If therefore ye would not be disobedient to the Most High, nor ungrateful to Him, who expired in agony for your redemption; if ye would participate in the rich blessings, which the mighty Redeemer hath promised to his servants; if ye would acquire fortitude for the hour of suffering, and courage for the hour of danger; if ye would be sustained and comforted under the trials of life; if ye would be lifted in a great degree above the vicissitudes of this world and be gladdened with the hope of immortal felicity in heaven; it is indispensably necessary, that ye keep the commandments of Jesus. And ought not the perfect holiness and perpetual happiness of heaven to enkindle desires more intense, and to awaken efforts more vigorous, than are excited by objects, which relate only to this world? The transient applauses of your fellow men, the perishable distinction, acquired by reaching an eminence, from which ye may look down upon others, the momentary admiration, gained by the display of treasured learning or of transcendent talents, the empty honor of living in the remembrance of the present or of having your name repeated by future generations, the bewildering joy of political triumph, the dazzling, but fading lustre, which can be thrown

around you by accumulated wealth and by the pomp and parade of life ; can these illusions of the world bear any comparison with the real, incorruptible, unchanging, everlasting blessings of the kingdom of Jesus Christ ?

I am standing in the presence of men, whom I respect, and whom the gospel, which I preach, commands me to honor. But "although ye are as gods, yet ye shall die like men." Ye will be swept away like the generations of your Fathers. Ye will be divested of dignity and despoiled of power. And when your eye shall be closing on all earthly scenes ; then will the public interests of this commonwealth, of this united Republic, and of all the kingdoms of the earth seem to you light as vanity, except as they affect the interests of the kingdom of Christ ; then will that political zeal, which enthrones itself in the heart, seem to you madness ; and then, if ye have no bright prospects, no cheering expectations, no elevated hopes, the approach of the king of terrors will fill you with dismay. Beyond the grave I shall stand with you in another assembly, in the great congregation of all the children of men, "for the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God." Then shall the dead be raised, and the almighty judge "will render to every man according to his deeds, to them, who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life ; but unto them, that are contentious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man, that doeth evil—but glory, honor, and peace to every man, that worketh good—for there is no respect of persons with God."

May God in infinite mercy grant, that in that great and dreadful day of the Lord, in which the kingdoms of this world shall be destroyed, and the whole earth shall be in flames, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the heavens shall be rolled together like a scroll and shall pass away with a great noise, we may all stand undismayed amid the ruins of creation, and with the ransomed of the Lord may ascend to the heavenly Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon our heads, "an entrance being ministered unto us abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." AMEN.

